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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/631,193

07/31/2003

Grant E. Randall SR.

60246-225; 10,129

2187

26096

7590

06/13/2006

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EXAMINER

WILKENS, JANET MARIE

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3637

DATE MAILED: 06/13/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/631,193	Applicant(s) RANDALL ET AL.	
	Examiner Janet M. Wilkens	Art Unit 3637	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 March 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,9,10,13-20 and 22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,9,13-18,20 and 22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 10 and 19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Montes in view of DeWitt. Montes teaches insulation panels (10,12) each with a first skin (20), a second skin (20), insulation (14) and flexible snap-fit connectors (40,41). For claim 1, Montes fails to teach that two of the connectors are located transverse to each other. DeWitt teaches panels (10-13) having connectors (16,18) located transverse to each other. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the panels of Montes by positioning connectors transversely to each other, such as is taught by DeWitt, to increase the ways in which the panels can be attached to other panels to form a structure.

Claims 1, 9, 13-16 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over DeWitt in view of Montes. DeWitt teaches more than three panels (10-13) to form a cooler/refrigerator, each panel with a first skin (21,22), a second skin (21,22), insulation (20) and connectors (16,18) located transverse to each other. For claims 1 and 13, DeWitt fails to teach flexible snap fit connectors. Montes teaches insulation panels (10,12) each with a first skin (20), a second skin (20), insulation (14) and flexible snap-fit connectors (40,41). It would have been obvious to one having

ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the panels of DeWitt by using alternate connectors thereon, i.e. using the flexible snap-fit connectors of Montes instead of the tongue and groove connectors presently used, since these connectors are functionally equivalent and it would appear that either type of connector would work equally well between the panels of DeWitt. Furthermore, the snap-fit connectors of Montes, if used on the panels of DeWitt, would provide a more secure attachment.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over DeWitt in view of Montes and Anderson. DeWitt teaches more than three panels (10-13) to form a cooler/refrigerator, each panel with a first skin (21,22), a second skin (21,22), insulation (20) and connectors (16,18) located transverse to each other. First claim 17, DeWitt fails to teach flexible snap fit connectors. Montes teaches insulation panels (10,12) each with a first skin (20), a second skin (20), insulation (14) and flexible snap-fit connectors (40,41). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the panels of DeWitt by using alternate connectors thereon, i.e. using the flexible snap-fit connectors of Montes instead of the tongue and groove connectors presently used, since these connectors are functionally equivalent and it would appear that either type of connector would work equally well between the panels of DeWitt. Furthermore, the snap-fit connectors of Montes, if used on the panels of DeWitt, would provide a more secure attachment. Second claim 17, DeWitt fails to teach a curved flange which covers the seams between the panels. Anderson teaches a curved flange (25) inserted between attached panels to hide the seam created there between. It would have been obvious to one have ordinary skill in the art at the time of

the invention to modify the assembly of DeWitt in view of Montes by adding seams, such as the seams taught by Anderson there between for the advantage stated above.

Claims 1, 9 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Montes in view of Edgar. Montes teaches insulation panels (10,12) each with a first skin (20), a second skin (20), insulation (14) and flexible snap-fit connectors (40,41). For claims 1 and 20, Montes fails to teach that two of the connectors are located transverse to each other and to a longitudinal axis of the insulating body. Edgar teaches more than three panels (Fig. 2) to form a structure, several panels (D) having connectors located transverse to each other (see Fig. 2; D right lower portion). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the panels of Montes by positioning connectors transversely to each other, such as is taught by DeWitt, to increase the ways in which the panels can be attached to other panels to form a structure.

Claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Montes in view of Edgar as applied to claims 1, 9, and 20 above, and further in view of DeWitt. As stated above, Edgar teaches the limitations of claim 20, including a panel with an insulating body. For claim 22, Montes in view of Edgar fails to teach that the body is specifically made of foam. DeWitt teaches a panel wherein the insulating body is made of foam (see abstract). It would have been an obvious consideration to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use foam as the material for the insulation body of Montes in view of Edgar, such as is taught by DeWitt, to provide good insulating, light weight and well known material in the panel.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 10 and 19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. Delay in finding the above cited references is regretted.

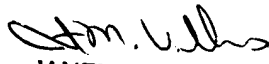
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Janet M. Wilkens whose telephone number is (571) 272-6869. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lanna Mai can be reached on (571) 272-6867. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3637

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Wilkins
June 8, 2006


JANET M. WILKENS
PRIMARY EXAMINER
Art 3637